

LETTERS ADDRESSED TO JULIE HERBAU
First Superior General 1832 - 1838
Superior General of the Sisters of St. Joseph 1838-18__
Died 1864
(2 Letters dated 1834 and 1835)

L.S.J.M.J

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Very Reverend Mother

I cannot tell you how pleased I am to see all the blessings which, in his mercy, the Lord has bestowed on the convent of St. Joseph. You are really children of predilection; I cannot contain my joy, and the sentiments of gratitude that animate me without ceasing, and I thank God for his goodness. Let us pray our Holy Angels and Patron Saints, especially the Queen of the Angels and Saints, let us pray to them I say, to join us in thanking God for his divine mercies. My dear Mother, how much help and means of salvation and perfection we have received! You can all say that God does not do as much for others, that he has given you greater knowledge of his holy law than the rest of men. It is a genuine consolation for me to know that God is not dealing with ungrateful people. I know your dispositions well enough to dare to believe that all of you, no matter the cost, wish to remain faithful to the sacred commitments which your love of Christ has impelled you to contract, and that you will not be separated from the object of your love and gratitude either by hell or your own sinfulness. That is how I feel and think about you, Reverend Mother. I beg you to tell our dear Children this; I am sure that not one of them will contradict me, but all will agree most positively, that Jesus will be their all; and they will renounce anything that might diminish the ardor of the love they have promised, and do have for him.

Continue to enjoy in peace, the gifts of the Lord, and he will add to them the graces you need. Reject all sentiments and all thoughts which might trouble the heart where Jesus Christ is pleased to dwell. Take care not to let the enemy ever have the dark satisfaction of seeing the dwelling place of the Lord troubled by any uncontrolled passion. No, my children, let nothing disturb you that is contrary to this holy serenity which you must always keep, for the divine Spouse is justly jealous of your heart and its emotions. Beware of anything which would appear contrary to the peace which you must preserve, beware, because it is the angel of darkness; very often it is an illusion, all the more dangerous as it comes to you either through fear of evil or through love of good. Mistrust yourselves, no doubt, no agitation; but real confidence, unlimited tenderness and devotion. Oh Mary! Oh Joseph! May your adopted children walk steadily in the path of perfection; may your dear daughters triumph over all their enemies under your powerful protection and attain the goal they are striving for. May they love Jesus as much as they should, and may Jesus always open to them his Heart burning with divine love.

These are the sentiments which my heart feels it had to express to you to-day; I feel that God is the author of them and wants you to realize that he has given me the heart of a Father towards those he has given to me as Children.

Your devoted Spiritual Father,
C. G. Van Crombrugghe

Ghent, 20 Sept. 1834